



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# JAPAN IN ACTION

BY JEREMIAH W. JENKS

---

JAPAN, to carry out her policy in the Far East, on August 15, 1914, sent an ultimatum to Germany. She advised the Imperial German Government:

To withdraw immediately from Japanese and Chinese waters German men-of-war and armed vessels of all kinds, and to disarm at once those which cannot be so withdrawn.

To deliver on a date not later than September 15 to the Imperial Japanese authorities, without condition or compensation, the entire leased territory of Kiaochow, with a view to the eventual restoration of the same to China.

It was further stated that unless an unconditional acceptance was received by noon of August 23, 1914, "Japan may be compelled to take such action as she may deem necessary to meet the situation."

Thus Japan entered the war.

Inasmuch as throughout the war the Japanese have defended their own actions by accusing China of neglect, it is worth noting that before this action of Japan China had taken entirely suitable steps to play her own part worthily.

To protect her own interests and to secure her neutrality, she suggested the following steps:

1. That there should be neutralized under Chinese control all her territory leased to foreign belligerent nations or those that might become belligerent.

2. If war were waged on her territory, the war-like acts of belligerents should be limited to specified areas. [It will be recalled that such limitations had been made with the consent of the Powers during the Russo-Japanese war] and

3. That China would join the Allies.

Of course, the last proposition was not made until the others had failed, but China earnestly desired that her first suggestion be carried out. Had she been a strong nation, she would have put this policy into effect without consult-

ing the Powers. Under the conditions, the proposal was made, and the friendly offices of the United States were sought to carry out the policy. The German legation was inclined to be favorable, likewise Great Britain, while the United States was ready to take the initiative.

The ultimatum of Japan, with her subsequent acts in Shantung, frustrated the worthy purpose of China. Americans should not forget, however, that China at the very beginning attempted to play her part wisely and well, and that Japan was the nation that blocked these efforts. We should note, again, that in ordering Germany "to withdraw immediately from Japanese and Chinese waters," Japan assumed a prerogative that belonged only to China. Note also that this was an uncalled-for assumption, because, as a matter of fact, China did intern all war ships of both belligerents in waters that China controlled; but from Japan's insulting assumption, China realized at once her deadly purpose.

Next, China attempted to limit the scope of military operations, when the Japanese and British attacked Tsingtau. There was no need, on military grounds, to go outside the neutral zone about Kiaochow that had been leased to Germany, but China attempted to fix even more liberal limits. Great Britain scrupulously followed the wishes of China in this regard. The Japanese, on the contrary, landed their troops some hundred and fifty miles away from Tsingtau, at Lungkow, far beyond the limits fixed, and in going overland to make the attack they found excuses to seize the control of the entire railway between Tsingtau and Tsinan, the capital of Shantung, taking control of telegraphs, posts, roads, and assuming the military control of all important territory. China protested vigorously against such a policy, but without avail.

On November 7, 1914, Tsingtau surrendered. Japan from that time on has maintained her control of the entire railroad line and interfered with the police and local administration in many parts of the Province of Shantung far removed from any possible relation to the war.

The Powers, including the United States, had acquiesced so readily in her high-handed acts in Shantung, that Japan felt emboldened to clinch her hold still more firmly and to extend widely the scope of her operations.

On January 18, 1915, the Japanese Minister presented

the noteworthy "twenty-one demands," set out in five different groups. They were presented, not to the Foreign Office, but direct to the President. China was warned that she must act promptly and accept all demands without change, and that all proceedings must be kept secret. In spite of the warnings the Chinese, through newspaper correspondents, made the facts known.

Japan denied, emphatically and completely, the truthfulness of the facts as published. Japanese newspapers were warned not to publish or discuss the matter. Her representatives abroad were ordered to deny the facts and news regarding this. The Japanese Minister in Peking officially denied to the other legations that any demands had been made. When copies of the original demands had become known to other foreign Governments, Japan still denied that there were twenty-one demands, but presented a list of eleven of the least objectionable.

Meanwhile, she was pressing for an immediate answer, and on May 7, 1915, she delivered an ultimatum giving two days for acceptance, otherwise "the Imperial Japanese Government will take such steps as may be necessary."

Having failed to secure intervention by any other nation, China had no alternative but to accept, although, even then, she refused under all conditions to accept a few of the worse demands.

Let Americans now, while Japan is making so many assertions about what she proposes to do in the future in Shantung, note carefully the facts just mentioned, and consider whether they are willing to accept her official word unaccompanied by any acts on matters that concern not only China but our own rights in the Far East.

Regarding the promise to return the leased territory of Kiaochow to China, Baron Kato in December stated in the Japanese Diet that this promise was conditioned upon Germany yielding Kiaochow without resistance, and that "restitution after a campaign was not thought of."

Concerning America's connection with the "twenty-one demands," our State Department on May 16, 1915, through a note sent to both Japan and China, formally notified both Governments "that it cannot recognize any agreement or undertaking which has been entered into, or which may be entered into between the Governments of China and Japan impairing the treaty rights of the United States and its

citizens in China, the political or territorial integrity of the Republic of China, or the international policy commonly known as the open door policy."

The United States is, therefore, in position to-day to take any action that it deems proper to protect our interests in the Far East.

Having failed to secure a method by which it could check Japan's aggression, the Chinese Government next turned its attention to making provision for a more just treatment in the future, or possibly for relief from the injustice already done her, by taking measures to secure a seat at the Peace Conference as one of the Allies. It is now known that, early in the war, President Yuan Shi K'ai had thought of joining the Allies. If the Allies would consent, the Chinese would capture Tsingtau from the Germans. Failing in his attempt to maintain neutrality, or to limit military operations wherever Japan was concerned, he next proposed to send troops to participate in the capture and urged that all moves in Chinese territory be entrusted to the Chinese troops. Japan refused. Again, in August, 1915, he proposed joining the Allies, but was discouraged by the British Minister. Later, on October 30, 1915, acting on the suggestion of one of his foreign advisers, he again took up the question, this time sounding the Russian, French and American Governments, as well as the British. The matter was now given formal consideration. The United States, at that date a neutral Power, could take no formal action, but it is well understood that the American Minister was personally sympathetic with the movement, and there is no doubt that the American Government would have welcomed it.

On November 23, 1915, the representatives of Great Britain, France, and Russia had a formal conference with Viscount Ishii, at that time Minister of Foreign Affairs in Tokio. These representatives, in the name of their Governments, suggested to Japan that China join them as an ally. Japan, however, objected. Of course, official reports of the interview are not available, but reports from various sources agree that Viscount Ishii summed up the objections of Japan as being, in effect, that her interests in regard to China were paramount and that she must maintain a firm hand regarding them. Moreover (and this is the significant thing for Americans to remember in considering the

future of the Far East) he said that Japan cannot view without apprehension the prospect of a large Chinese army such as would be required if she were to participate actively in war, and she cannot view without uneasiness "a moral awakening of four hundred million Chinese" such as would be brought about by such participation. Millard's version of the statement is slightly different, but of equal significance: "Japan could not regard with equanimity the organization of an efficient Chinese army such as would be required for her active participation in the war, nor could Japan fail to regard with uneasiness a liberation of the economic activities of a nation of 400,000,000 people." Do American citizens object to either a "liberation of the economic activities" or to the "moral awakening of 400,000,000 Chinese"? Or are they prepared now, by acceding to the Peace Treaty, to give their formal approval to Japan's prevention of either the liberation of Chinese economic activities or her moral awakening? Suffice it to say that Japan's protest was sufficient, and that China was not permitted to join the Allies at that time.

As soon as it became likely that the United States would enter the war as a belligerent, a new factor of prime importance was introduced. The United States now took the initiative in helping China come into the war. The apparent sympathy of the other nations with Japan had so weakened China's confidence in Great Britain and France that she felt that if she could not join the Allies a victory of the Allies was not likely to benefit China; and inasmuch as the issue of the war was still in abeyance, and apparently Germany's position was becoming more favorable, it was thought unwise to aggravate Germany unnecessarily. Nothing could be gained thereby, while much might be lost.

The United States Government broke off official relations with Germany on February 3, 1917. The official invitation to neutrals to follow the example of the United States in severing diplomatic relations with Germany was received in Peking the following day. The American Minister at once took steps to bring the matter to a prompt decision. It was highly desirable that it be accepted. Japan, it was felt, would continue her opposition. It at once developed that Great Britain, France, Russia and Italy, while on the whole favorably impressed by our suggestion, would not urge it strongly.

The Japanese Minister sought a private interview with the President, Li Yuan Hung. He urged that China would run a great risk by joining America; that the United States would probably not be effective in the war; while she had expressed her sympathy with China, America had done little for her. It was very doubtful that Germany would be defeated by the Allies. It was much safer for China to rely upon Japan, for after the war there would doubtless be harmonious action between Japan and Germany, and then Japan could readily protect China. The Minister also presented similar arguments to the Prime Minister. Under the circumstances, the Chinese Government naturally hesitated.

Finally, unable to answer officially (the cables being out of order), the question of the Chinese as to whether in the Peace Conference America would support the Chinese claims in Shantung if China entered the war, the American Minister assured them that, in his judgment, such assistance would be given; and on the basis of that assurance China accepted America's invitation over the protest of Japan, and severed diplomatic relations.

The United States Government, so far as is known, accepted the assurance of its Minister to China as its own.

Later, still acting under the influence of the United States, China, on August 14, 1917, declared war against Germany. The hope of freedom from Japan's aggression was China's chief motive. In addition, she hoped to be free from the burden of the German and Austrian Boxer indemnities; to secure from the Allies satisfactory loans for war purposes and also for development purposes afterward; to get back under her control German concessions at Tientsin and Hankow as well as in Shantung; to secure as a result of her participation a general revision of treaties more to her advantage, and to supplant Germans in China's public service, especially in the customs and Salt Gabelle, with Chinese. All of these motives were laudable, as much so as those of any of the Allies, and vastly more so than those of Japan. In this continuance of her policy to enter the war, let Americans remember that China was acting on the urgent advice of the United States, and with at least implied assurances of support by the United States at the Peace Conference.

When the Balfour and Viviani missions were here in

April and May, 1917, there was much talk among persons conversant with conditions in the Far East regarding the acts of Japan in China. Her deliberate attempts to further her own interests, to block the entrance of China into the war, and to oppose America's interest in China's intervention, were well known.

Until the time of the Peace Conference, Americans believed that Great Britain and France really sympathized with their views regarding the Far East. Yet it seems certain that, although several weeks before the arrival in the United States of these Missions, secret agreements had been reached with Japan by which they promised to support Japan in her claims upon Shantung at the Peace Conference, no intimation of these treaties was given to our Government. The Chinese Government and well-informed Americans in China suspected some such agreement, but both Great Britain and France permitted our Government to go ahead without such knowledge and to put itself into a most embarrassing position for the future on account of the lack of that knowledge. I am making no suggestion either for or against the policy of Great Britain or France in this regard. I do, however, think it important that all Americans should know the way in which we have been drawn into our present most difficult situation by the suppression of the knowledge of these secret treaties.

The Ishii Mission reached this country about the middle of August. Owing to the tensivity of feeling, great care was taken by our State Department and by the public to give its members a most elaborate and cordial, not to say effusive, reception and treatment throughout the period of their stay. Baron (now Viscount) Ishii is, as we know, a most eloquent speaker, and his skill in handling his difficult task is deserving of only high praise so far as outward form of expression is concerned.

Naturally, our State Department and our publicists were eager to know the specific purposes of this mission. No one believed that they were limited to merely war purposes, although those were of course included. About a week before the Mission's arrival in Washington I received, as did the State Department, a confidential memorandum purporting to be Ishii's programme. He was to assert:

that Japan has no ulterior motive in respect to the integrity of China;



that she adheres to her open door pledges; that nothing subversive of China's sovereignty is contemplated; that Japan's sole object is, by means entirely pacific, to bring order out of chaos in China, with no special privilege in view; that Japan understands China better than any other nation, and, owing to her geographical proximity and *special political position and interests in the Far East, she should, therefore, when essential, take the leading rôle in dealing with China as the United States does with the Nations of the Western hemisphere* [the italics are mine.]

There can be no doubt that Ishii attempted to carry this plan through, and that, from Japan's viewpoint—or, at any rate, the viewpoint she promulgated—he succeeded in accomplishing his mission; though he failed to secure recognition of any special political position which would warrant her in taking the “leading rôle in dealing with China as the United States does with the nations of the Western hemisphere.”

In making public the Lansing-Ishii Agreement, Japan, in order to advance in China her own interpretation of this agreement, again deliberately tricked the State Department by publishing the agreement in Peking in the Chinese press before the time agreed upon to have it given out simultaneously in Tokyo and Washington; and also in giving out the translation of the agreement, the Japanese deliberately employed the Chinese and Japanese characters, which gave to the expression “special interests” a significance amounting to “vested interests” or “proprietorship” or “sovereignty” over China, while the characters used by the Americans meant merely “a close or strong general interest in the welfare of China,” not any vested, proprietary or paramount interest. After the Americans had published their version, the Japanese endeavored to persuade the American Legation to accept the Japanese translation and amend the American version. That, however, the Americans did not accede to, and the Japanese to this day have insisted upon their version as the correct one.

The Japanese have also frequently employed the expression “Monroe Doctrine for Asia” to explain and excuse their acts in China by thus inferentially alleging a parallel between such acts and those of the United States in the Western hemisphere. Since the methods are entirely different, that seems like a deliberate attempt to mislead the world; and unfortunately they have succeeded in misleading many influential Americans who are not well informed

on the policies of the two countries. The United States has never asserted any right to special economic investments in Mexico, for example, that would in any way exclude similar investments by France, Japan, Great Britain or any other nation. She has objected only when political power seemed to be sought. There has been always a real Open Door in this hemisphere so far as the United States Government is concerned. Americans should no longer permit themselves to be hoodwinked by the expression "Monroe Doctrine for Asia."

The Japanese policy in China has been, clearly, to keep conditions unsettled by fomenting disturbances and hostilities between the so-called North and South factions, and to keep China weak. This is not a matter of suspicion or careless observation on the part of prejudiced Americans. It is a matter officially known, reported upon, and recorded in our State Department, and supported by the overwhelming testimony of Chinese, American and British officials both North and South who are fully conversant with the facts.

Japan has also attempted to secure and advance her economic supremacy throughout China by extensive loan operations in that country largely through the wealth that she has made out of the war. For months under the Terauchi régime, one of his agents, Nishihara, formerly unofficial but no less active, steered most vigorously Japan's financial drive on China. The work was carried on secretly. The securities taken in many cases were in themselves insufficient for any proper loan and their acceptance could be defended only on the ground of political expediency and the intent to exert, at the proper time, political pressure. Such obligations were even extended beyond Japan's capacity to supply the full amounts required unless the other Allies were to make her loans. The use of the loan was, in many cases, illegitimate, and contrary to agreements with other Powers; but such use was made with the full and deliberate connivance of Japan. Loans purely economic on their face became purely political in practice. Even those that were proper if carried out in the right spirit were not so carried out, and Japan has shown no intention of so managing them. There has been a clear intention to secure in advance a claim on Chinese resources in order that that agreement may be enforced afterward.

The result will be the mortgaging of China to Japan to an extent that will infringe very seriously on the already acquired rights of the United States, Great Britain and France. There had been a feeling in Peking that this Chinese muddle would be settled equitably at the Peace Conference. But what has been the result?

The full significance of the Shantung settlement seems to be appreciated by few. It is ordinarily asserted that merely the German rights in Shantung have been awarded to Japan, and that therefore China is no worse off than she was before. People shut their eyes to the moral issue and the methods employed by Japan to get this claim, and do not realize its economic and political significance. Attention is frequently called to the fact that the German concession does not include the entire province of Shantung, some 55,000 square miles (about the size of Illinois), with a population of some forty millions, but only the territory surrounding the Bay of Kiaochow, some two hundred square miles in extent, with a population of 195,000; and it is further added that Japan has promised to restore to China the political rights over even this territory of Kiaochow, retaining only the economic rights. The Japanese seem scrupulously to have avoided calling attention to the following significant fact: that in the agreement to which they forced China to accede, they reserved a Japanese settlement, selected by themselves, to remain under the absolute control and direction of Japan. After they have taken their pick of territory, there might be provided an international settlement if the other nations desire.

The outlines of this exclusive Japanese settlement seem to be clearly defined. It includes all of the wharves and other port facilities, all of the railway terminals, the cable terminals, the central telegraph, telephone, and post offices, the customs, together with all of the best business and governmental sites in Tsingtao. Furthermore, the German rights which Japan is to inherit under the treaty give her the exclusive prior right in case China wishes to build two other trunk line railroads in Shantung, to finance them or build them for China on terms similar to the Tsingtao-Tsinanfu road, to furnish all railway materials for such roads, to finance or administer the opening of mines in the province; and, in case China wishes to make any other developments of whatever nature,—

The Chinese Government binds itself, in all cases where foreign assistance, in persons, capital or material, may be needed for any purpose whatever within the Province of Shantung, to offer the said work of supplying of materials, in the first instance to German [now Japanese] manufacturers and merchants engaged in undertakings of the kind in question.

Still further, it includes the right to extend the existing important trunk lines of the main railroad outside of the province of Shantung into the very heart of China, tapping the two existing north and south main trunk lines, thus (especially in the winter when the other northern ports are closed) enabling her to divert much of the traffic to the port of Tsingtao, over which Japan has exclusive control.

A comparison naturally springs to one's mind: Suppose that Great Britain, with her control of Canada (which is a less rigorous control than that which Japan exerts over Chinese Manchuria or Eastern Inner Mongolia), were to hold also under her control the Port of New York; the prior right to finance or build and furnish supplies to all railroads; all important mines, present and future, in that territory; and any other improvements that our people, through the Government, might contemplate making in any of that territory, north of Washington and east of Chicago, provided Great Britain would perform this work for us as cheaply as any other responsible bidder. Before acceding to these sections of the Peace Treaty regarding Shantung, Americans should consider carefully what such a grip exerted by Great Britain would mean not only to the United States, but to all other nations of the world wishing to do business with the United States.

The issue is clear: Japan has taken measures that are absolutely unjustifiable from both the moral and economic viewpoints. She has employed force, treachery, threats, with a boldness and skill that command admiration, but only accentuate the danger as one looks toward the future. Had the President not signed the Peace Treaty, our position would have been unassailable. Heretofore we have given due warning that we would not accede to Japan's aggressive acts if they affected American interests. The President having signed the treaty, the responsibility rests now with the Senate.

JEREMIAH W. JENKS.